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## PENCE FIGHTS TO LOWER HEALTHCARE COSTS

**Washington, Mar 13, 2004** - WASHINGTON, DC – U.S. Congressman Mike Pence spoke on the House floor today in favor of a bill that caps frivolous lawsuits as a way to lower the insurance costs for doctors across the country. The following are Pence's remarks followed by a summary of the bill:

"Mr. Speaker, as I rise today I think of my wife, my three children and my parents. And I think of the good health that God has so mercifully given our family over the years.

"And I think about this great country of ours and the cutting edge research our universities and our hospitals perform in the name of advancing health care and saving lives around the world. Mr. Speaker, the breakthroughs are absolutely amazing.

"Without a doubt, we have the best healthcare system in the world.

"Yet, Mr. Speaker the costs of healthcare are rising. So much so to the point where constituents of mine like Gary Miller in Portland, IN who just called me this morning are living in fear.

"Fear, Mr. Speaker, of rising health care costs.

"Mr. Speaker, we are here today to tell people like Gary Miller that help is on the way.

"Mr. Speaker, physicians in this country are some of the finest people you will ever meet. It takes a special heart of compassion to help sick people day in and day out. And so, Mr. Speaker, no well-meaning compassionate physician should be forced to close the doors of his or her practice just because they can't afford to pay healthcare premiums caused by frivolous litigation.

"Mr. Speaker, even the most well-meaning trial lawyers in the country are filing litigation that is driving healthcare premiums through the roof.

“Yet, Mr. Speaker, the Good Book says, “You shall not muzzle an ox while it treads out the grain.” And today Mr. Speaker, I say to my colleagues, it is time to take the muzzle off the physicians in this country and allow them to practice.

“Mr. Speaker, it is time to free doctors from the fear of bankruptcy and potential limitless litigation that currently hurts patients by causing doctors to engage in defensive medicine.

“Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote yes on this bill so people like Gary Miller don’t have to live in fear anymore either. I urge a yes vote on this bill so we can get back on the road to affordable healthcare in this country.”

The legislation:

- Will improve patients’ access to health care by reforming our medical liability systems.
- Will reduce health care costs - some have estimated “defensive medicine” practices cost well over \$50 billion per year without improving medical care one bit.
- Is modeled after California’s successful 27-year-old law (MICRA) reforming its medical liability system.

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